

of His Millions?

Twice Divorced,
Up

the Duchess d'Uses, one of
the best known women of
the position in France,
and near relative of the
Duke de Chaulnes.



The Duchess de Chaulnes (Theodora Shonts) and her son, the little Duke de Chaulnes, grandson of Shonts.

"You needn't talk to me like a preacher—this is no place for sermons," Mrs. Thomas replied. I rose to leave. The lawyer left in considerable of a temper at me. "Don't mind him," Mrs. Thomas said, and then she smiled, gave me her private telephone number to call her by at any time. She took me to the elevator, and her last words were, "I hope you change your mind about giving me the statement I want—you know it will be best for you."

Rows there were wherever Shonts and Mrs. Thomas lived. Not all were concerned with smashing crockery. Here is a record of a rumpus which took place at their Summer cottage at Redbank, New Jersey, as narrated by a member of that household, and in this instance a chair flew through the Summer air instead of a lamp or a vase:

"In 1915 I was a member of the household of Mrs. Amanda C. Thomas, both at the apartment at No. 490 West End avenue and at the cottage in Redbank, New Jersey, where Mrs. Thomas, Mr. Shonts and Mr. Shonts's mother spent the Summer. During the whole time that I was with Mrs. Thomas I observed many quarrels and unpleasant encounters between Mrs. Thomas and Mr. Shonts. When Mrs. Thomas could not get Mr. Shonts to do the things she wanted him to do by coaxing him and acting very sweet with him she would get very angry, would swear and use words unpleasant to hear, and was so careless who heard her that on several occasions I have pulled her away from the window because the neighbors were watching her and listening to her.

"I was with her at Redbank in May and June, 1915. One day, I think it was on a Sunday, Mr. Shonts wanted Mrs. Thomas to take a trip with him to visit his Pennsylvania farm. For some reason or other Mrs. Thomas did not want to go. He kept urging her to go, and this made her angry.

"Mrs. Thomas called Mr. Shonts names and swore at him, as she often did when they quarrelled. He tried to reason with her and argued and pleaded, but this only made her more angry. Almost always when he kept his temper it made her angrier than ever, and she always got mad when she could not have her own way. On this occasion Mr. Shonts finally got angry himself and scolded her for acting as she did. At last Mrs. Thomas picked up a chair and struck at him with it. She was not far from him at the time, and she half threw the chair and half struck at him with it. She broke a leg off of the chair, but whether she hit Mr. Shonts or not I could not see from where I stood."

Mrs. Thomas seems to have been able to control herself when she wanted to. Her fits of rage do not appear



"Then we heard glass break, and heard Mr. Shonts swearing terribly and Mrs. Thomas shrieking. More glass broke and furniture fell.

"Pretty soon Mr. Shonts came out of the door to the sitting room and slammed it behind him and started downstairs. Mrs. Thomas rushed out and cried:

"You come back here—come back here! If you don't I'll follow you into the street! Come back here!"

"Mr. Shonts stopped and said, 'You keep still now. I won't stand this. If you come downstairs I'll break your neck!'

—From sworn statement of a member of the Shonts-Thomas household.

been thrown out as administratrix. Once more Amanda had triumphed—once more the outraged widow was humiliated.

But the tide has turned at last. The order of Surrogate Fowler dismissing Mrs. Shonts has been overturned by unanimous decision of the Appellate Court. Mrs. Shonts has been reinstated by the court—"my friend Amanda" and her "last will" are dealt with in these straightforward words by the Judges:

"The Surrogate deemed himself bound in consequence of the mere production of the alleged will to revoke the designation of Mrs. Shonts as temporary administratrix of her deceased husband's estate. THE DOCUMENT PROPOSED POSSESSES NO SUCH VIRTUE. At most it was an alleged will,

assailed as the ineffectual testamentary effort of an enfeebled mind governed and controlled by undue and sinister influence, and therefore incapable of probate as the will of the deceased. Until duly admitted to probate as a valid will, and then only upon the actual issuance of letters testamentary, would the temporary administratrix become *functus officio*.

"The appointment of Mrs. Shonts was not obtained by a false suggestion of a material fact. Her information as to the alleged will she frankly laid before the Surrogate. Nothing was concealed. She had the right to treat the alleged will as a nullity, and the most that the petitioning executor claimed was that she had seen a copy of it.

"The appointment of Mrs. Shonts, the widow, was in all respects proper and regular; and no sufficient cause existed to vacate or annul that order.

"The removal of Mrs. Shonts as temporary administratrix of the estate of her deceased husband was wholly unauthorized. She had been regularly and duly appointed and had duly qualified by taking the required oath and filing the security required by the order appointing her. No charge of disqualification or of official misconduct rested against her, and her removal was upon grounds not sustained by the facts.

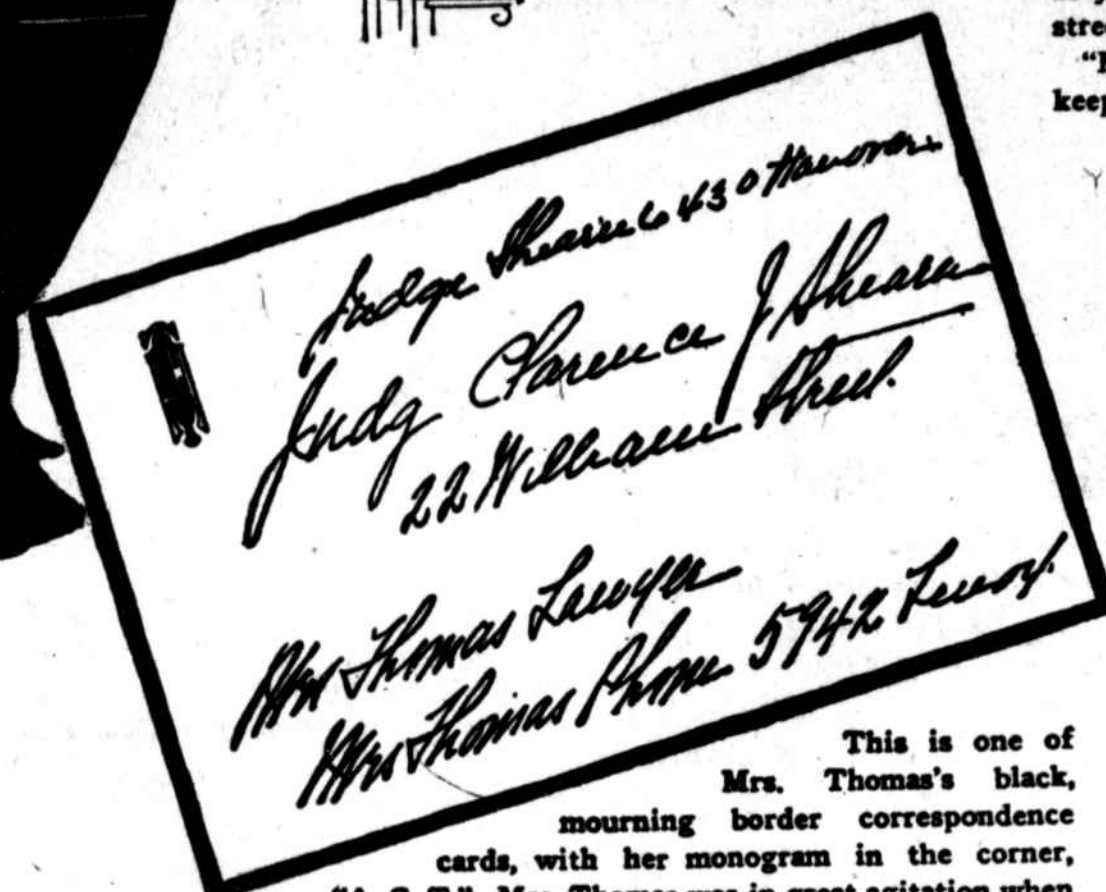
"The order of the Surrogate removing Mrs. Shonts should be reversed, with costs, and said order granting temporary administration reinstated, and letters should thereon forthwith issue out of said Surrogate's Court to said Milla D. Shonts."

The tide at last has turned. The courts at last have begun to listen to the story of Shonts and his friend Amanda as the attorneys for the widow have spread the facts and the evidence before them.

The moral lesson of the Shonts triangle is being preached to the public by the judges on the bench. Rev. Dr. Straton's question is already being answered:

"If the wronged wife is finally robbed and the other woman gets this money, will not the tendency be for every weak girl in the city to ask herself the question, 'If she did these things and got away with it, and now flourishes, why may not I?'"

(To be Continued Next Sunday)



her former butler, Jules Bizuel, declined to provide her with statements as to the platonic relations of herself and Mr. Shonts. This card bears mute evidence of her agitation. She repeats the words "Judge Shearn" twice and once leaves the "e" off the word Judge. She writes it small and she writes it big. She forgets the apostrophe which belongs on the end of her name, and the card has practically no punctuation whatever.

to have gone to extreme lengths with tradesmen, household servants, her chauffeurs or her friends. There is no evidence of her smashing glassware, cracking mirrors and throwing lamps and vases around except for the benefit of Mr. Shonts.

Mrs. Thomas was an actress in her early career. Was she very largely playing a part when she whipped herself into those towering paroxysms of rage and swore and screamed and hurled things at Shonts's head? Shonts was a good deal of a bully himself. Was Mrs. Thomas shrewd enough to figure out that the way to handle him was to bully him?

Did Mrs. Thomas stage a rumpus, try it out and find that Shonts surrendered? From that first try-out and experience did she settle upon a policy of how to manage her "rich man"? Every time he tried to renew relations with his wife and daughters did Amanda fly into a wild fit of anger and frighten Shonts into submission? Did Shonts long to get rid of the Thomas woman, did he actually plan and scheme to escape from her clutches and never again hear her shrieking, swearing voice?

There is most extremely interesting evidence on all this which will be presented later.

If, then, Shonts was wretchedly unhappy with his Amanda—what a worthless bargain he made! If he traded a faithful wife and loving daughters for a screaming, swearing, fighting woman whom he feared—what a lesson his life with the Thomas woman teaches! Amanda's wedging herself into the old traction magnate's life seems to have meant misery for everybody except herself.

For ten long years Mrs. Thomas held the mastery over Shonts—and these were years of sorrow, humiliation and wretchedness for Mrs. Shonts and the daughters. Always at all points Mrs. Thomas won. Shonts cowered and obeyed—remembering the screaming voice and the flying lamp and vase and chair.

But the tide has turned.

The truth about Shonts's affairs is being told. For a brief few weeks she and her intimate friends and lawyers got possession of the Shonts estate by producing a suspicious "last will." Mrs. Shonts, the widow, had